

R 091530Z JAN 85
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2134
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL CAPETOWN
AMEMBASSY HARARE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

UNCLAS GABORONE 0097

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SUBJECT: BOTSWANA NEWSPAPER CARRIES ARTICLE MISREPRESENTING
U.S. SOUTHERN AFRICAN POLICY

1. (U) THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED BOTSWANA DAILY NEWS (JANUARY 8, 1985) CARRIED A LONG VERBOSE OVERVIEW OF 1984, THE "ORWELLIAN" YEAR ("VIOLENCE AND DISASTER, A GLEAM OF HOPE") CREDITED TO DEREK INGRAM OF GEMINI NEWS SERVICE. ONE PARAGRAPH MISREPRESENTS ONE FACET OF CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

2. (U) NINE PARAGRAPHS OF THE FULL-PAGE ARTICLE DEAL WITH "AFRICA'S MOST DRAMATIC POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS" IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, AND TOUCH ON SOUTH AFRICA'S CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES, ITS RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS AND THE RENEWED ATTEMPT TO CREATE "A BUFFERS REGION OF SUBDUED OR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORING STATES," BLACK UNIONS AND THE VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICAN TOWNSHIPS, AND BISHOP DESMOND TUTU'S CONDEMNATION OF U.S. SOUTHERN AFRICAN POLICY. THE OFFENDING PARAGRAPH READS QUOTE THE AMERICANS ARE CLOSELY INVOLVED IN MANY OF THESE MOVES IN A POLICY (OF) "CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT" AND ANOTHER PLANK OF THAT POLICY IS FOR SOUTH AFRICA TO TRY TO MAKE NKOMATI-TYPE AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER NEIGHBORS, NOTABLY BOTSWANA, LESOTHO, AND SWAZILAND. THEY HAD SUCCEEDED IN SWAZILAND, BUT THE OTHER TWO PROVED MORE STUBBORN. BOTSWANA SAYS NO. END QUOTE

3. (LOU) DRAWING ON EXISTING GUIDANCE, EMBASSY PLANS TO SEND THE FOLLOWING LETTER OVER THE SIGNATURE OF THE PAO TO THE EDITOR OF THE BOTSWANA DAILY NEWS: QUOTE: IN HIS "VIOLENCE AND DISASTER, A GLEAM OF HOPE," WHICH APPEARED IN THE BOTSWANA DAILY NEWS OF JANUARY 8, 1985, MR. DEREK INGRAM WRITES THAT ON "PLANK" OF THE U.S. POLICY OF "CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT" IS "FOR SOUTH AFRICA TO TRY TO MAKE NKOMATI-TYPE AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER NEIGHBORS, NOTABLY BOTSWANA, LESOTHO, AND SWAZILAND." THIS IS A MISSTATEMENT OF U.S. POLICY. THE POLICY OF "CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT" INCLUDES AN EFFORT TO REDUCE CROSS-BORDER VIOLENCE BETWEEN SOUTH AFRICA AND ITS NEIGHBORS. IN THE CASE OF THE NKOMATI ACCORD BETWEEN MOZAMBIQUE AND SOUTH AFRICA, WE WELCOMED THE AGREEMENT AS A TURNING POINT AWAY FROM THE DESTABILIZING POLITICS OF CONFRONTATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, IN FAVOR OF THE CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH OF NEGOTIATIONS. FOR THOSE TWO COUNTRIES, A FORMAL POLITICAL AGREEMENT MET THE NEEDS OF BOTH PARTIES. HOWEVER, AS ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE CHESTER CROCKER HAS SAID, "THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IS NOT PARTY TO ANY EFFORT TO IMPOSE A STANDARD FORMULA ON RELATIONS BETWEEN SOUTH AFRICA AND ITS NEIGHBORS. EACH RELATIONSHIP IS DISTINCT AND STANDS ON ITS OWN MERITS. COEXISTENCE CAN TAKE MANY FORMS. WHAT WE DO SUPPORT IS A REGIONAL CLIMATE OF DIALOGUE WHICH GIVES NEGOTIATION AND PEACEFUL CHANGE A CHANCE." THE U.S. GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS THE RIGHT OF EACH OF SOUTH AFRICA'S NEIGHBORS TO MAKE ITS OWN DECISION ABOUT THE TYPE OF ARRANGEMENTS IT WISHES TO MAKE WITH SOUTH AFRICA ON THE BASIS OF SOVEREIGN EQUALITY AND STRICT RECIPROCITY. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT NO COUNTRY SHOULD BE FORCED TO SIGN AN AGREEMENT WHICH IT VIEWS AS CONTRARY TO ITS NATIONAL INTERESTS. END QUOTE

MAINO